



The images (left to right) represent the War among the Angels (Breughel), the Temptation of Eve (Blake), and Banishment from Eden (Westall)

Click on each image for a larger version with documentation.

English 261: Survey of British Literature, Pt. I

crn 82016, sec 003 - 102 Oglebay Hall - TuTh 1:00 - 2:15

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COURSE POLICIES



Click [HERE](#) for current course policies statement.

These cover attendance, our responsibilities to one another, and all of the rules which govern the course. Please read carefully.

TEXTS

The Norton Anthology of English Literature, 8th edition, Vol. 1, M. H. Abrams & Stephen Greenblatt, eds. Paperback (2000) New York: W.W. Norton & Co. ISBN 0-393-97487-1.

YOU MUST PURCHASE THIS ANTHOLOGY IN THIS EDITION! NO EXCEPTIONS!

SCHEDULE

August:

- 25: Introduction
- 27: Backgrounds to *Beowulf*: Bede and "Caedmon's Hymn," "The Wanderer," "The Battle of Maldon," "The Wife's Lament," and "The Dream of the Rood."

September:

- 1: *Beowulf*
- 3: *Beowulf* [QUIZ]
- 8: *Piers Plowman* [selections]
- 10: Backgrounds to *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*: Geoffrey of Monmouth, Sir Thomas Malory, and all works by Marie de France
- 15: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*
- 17: Backgrounds to Chaucer; The Mystery Plays and all of the Middle English Lyrics.

- 22: Chaucer: "The General Prologue" and "The Miller's Prologue & Tale."
- 24: Chaucer: Wife of Bath's and Pardoner's "Prologues" and "Tales" and the "Nun's Priest's Tale."
- 29: **[FIRST EXAMINATION]**

ONLINE RESOURCES FOR MEDIEVAL PERIOD: [Readings in Old and Middle English with Seamus Heaney reading from his translation of *Beowulf*](#); [Alliterative and Accentual Poetry](#); [Center for Studies in Oral Tradition](#); [Benjamin Bagby's *Beowulf*](#); [Luminarium \(Middle English\)](#); [John Matthews Manly's useful commentary on *Piers the Plowman*](#); [Debra Schwartz's comments on Medieval Allegory](#); [Images from the Gawain manuscript](#); [The Chaucer Pages](#); [Images from the Ellesmere manuscript of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*](#); [The Ruthwell Cross \(Image\)](#); [The Ruthwell Cross \(Commentary\)](#); [Ezra Pound's "Ancient Music"](#);

October:

- 1: Backgrounds to Renaissance or Early Modern Period: Skelton, Queen Elizabeth, & "The Wider World"
- 6: Spenser, *The Faery Queen*, Book I
- 8: The sonneteers: Thomas Wyatt, Henry Howard, Spenser's "Amoretti," Phillip Sidney's sonnets
- 13: Phillip Sidney and William Shakespeare's sonnets
- 15: Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*
- 20: Ben Jonson, *Volpone*
- 22: The Metaphysical poets: Donne, Wroth, Herrick, Herbert, and Marvell
- 27: Francis Bacon
- 29: Milton: *Paradise Lost*

November:

- 1: Milton: *Paradise Lost*

ONLINE RESOURCES FOR RENAISSANCE/EARLY MODERN PERIOD: [Norton Archive for the 16th Century](#) ; [Luminarium \(Renaissance\)](#) ; [Elizabeth, The Golden Age Trailer](#) ; [The Edmund Spenser Home Page](#) ; [The Folger's "History and Form of the Sonnet" Page](#) ; [Excerpt from William Sharp's *The Sonnet*](#) ; [Linked Sources for Philip Sydney from Wikipedia](#) ; [A Biography of Christopher Marlowe](#) ; [A Good Shakespeare Page](#) ; [Norton Archive for the Early 17th Century](#) ; [Luminarium \(Early 17th Century\)](#) [A Biography of and Links for Ben Jonson](#) ; [Studying the Metaphysical Poets](#) ; ["John Donne" from Poets.org](#) ; ["Andrew Marvell" from Poets.org](#) ; [Robert Herrick page](#) ; [Images for *Paradise Lost*](#) ; [The Milton-L Home Page](#)

- 3: **[SECOND EXAMINATION]**
- 10: Background to Restoration/Eighteenth Century: All selections by Pepys and Addison & Steele plus William Hogarth, "Marriage a la Mode"
- 12: William Congreve: *The Way of the World*

- 17: Aphra Behn: *Oroonoko*
- 19: John Dryden: "MacFlecknoe," "Song for St. Cecelia's Day," "Alexander's Feast"

December:

- 1: Samuel Johnson: Selections from *The Dictionary* and *Lives of the Poets*
- 3: Jonathan Swift: Part 4 of *Gulliver's Travels: A Voyage to ... Houyhnhnms* & "A Modest Proposal"
- 8: Alexander Pope: "The Rape of the Lock"
- 10: Thomas Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard"

ONLINE RESOURCES FOR RESTORATION/EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY PERIOD:
[Norton Archive for the Restoration/Eighteenth Century](#) ; [Luminarium \(Restoration/Eighteenth Century\)](#) ; [Timeline incl. 1660 to 1689](#) ; [Pepys's Diary \(Excellent online Resource\)](#) ; [The Modern Essay: Addison, Steele, and Defoe](#) ; [Hogarth with linked images from most of the series of engravings](#) ; [Women and Restoration Theatre](#) ; [The Way of the World](#) ; [The Aphra Behn page](#) ; [Luminarium's John Dryden page](#) ; [A Guide to Samuel Johnson](#) ; [Notes on Jonathan Swift](#) ; [The Rape of the Lock homepage](#) ; [The Thomas Grey Archive](#) ;

•17 at 3:00 - 5:00 pm (subject to change) [**THIRD EXAMINATION**] The third examination will be given at the scheduled time for the final examination. See the grading policy below, and please note that this examination will be focused on the 18th century, but will nevertheless include material from the first and second parts of the course.

GRADES IN THIS COURSE

English 261 is a course that fulfills two General Education Curriculum objectives, 3: "The Past and its Traditions" and 5: "Artistic Expression." To a large extent, grades will be determined by how well students can indicate a mastery of these two objectives on examinations that are composed of short-answer questions and longer in-class essay assignments. On the average, fifty pages of reading are required per hour of class instruction. The texts are often written in earlier forms of English and deal with unfamiliar cultural, religious, and historical concepts. For that reason, students are urged to focus carefully preparing the reading assignments; no term paper is required in this course.

Three examinations are scheduled for the course, the third one being

administered at the time of the final examination. You must take all three examinations. Ideally, each examination counts 30% of your final grade, but you may elect to make the final examination (which will, in some small measure, be a cumulative examination of the course as well as an examination of the third part of the course) worth anywhere from 20% to 50% of your grade, which would then change the value of the earlier examinations. 10% of your grade is reserved to reward participation and timely preparation.

If I am aware that you are regularly absent, you'll not receive the full 10% credit I reserve to reward participation and preparation. But even though I may not take attendance as a matter of course, I still reserve the right to insist on your attendance at certain given classes, such as when we have a special speaker or other unusual situations arrive. These will be announced to you via your Mix account for the course, and you need to be sure that you check your mail there regularly. If you find that you cannot attend almost every classmeeting, please discuss the matter with me immediately. No matter how good the excuse, if you miss the work which the community of the assembled class itself alone makes possible, you have missed a major component of the course and you cannot reasonably be given credit for it. To summarize, 10% of your final grade is reserved to credit you for being prepared, for contributing to the informal lecture/discussion format of the class, and for generally making your participation in the class apparent. (The calculation for this portion of your grade is necessarily a holistic one: a holistic rating of "excellent" is worth 9% to 10%, one of "good" is worth 8%, one of "fair" is worth 7%, of "poor" is 6%, and one of "unsatisfactory" is 0% to 5%. These will be determined at the same time the final grade is determined.

LEARNING OUTCOMES & G.E.C. OBJECTIVES

Objective 3. *The Past and Its Traditions:* The course treats of texts written in England between about 700 C.E. and 1800 C.E. This section of the course divides this period into three parts (Medieval: 700-1500; Renaissance: 1500-1660; Restoration/18th Century: 1660-1800), giving one-third of the time of the course to each section. *Related Learning Outcomes:* Upon completion of the course, a successful student should be able to apply methods of critical thought to the understanding and analysis of issues related to the past. This outcome is supported by English 261 in that each text is discussed, its background and cultural

context presented, and a variety of interpretations entertained which introduce non-trivial analyses and comprehension of issues related to the past to the degree our time allows. Students are urged to develop a context to help uncover a variety of ways to read early texts. But it is also necessary to synthesize the effect of a variety of languages (in English 261, texts are read which were originally written in Latin, Old English (i.e., Anglo-Saxon), Old French [or “Anglo-Norman”], and Middle English). We also analyze the fashions in rhetoric, issues of literacy, and matters of textual production in order to fill out the political and cultural histories behind the texts. Short-answer questions on each examination ask you to demonstrate your general understanding of a selection of specific contexts, literary conventions, and other cultural and biographical matters relevant to all or most of the writers covered in the period being examined.

Objective 5. *Artistic Expression:* Most of the texts we read are quite clearly within the bounds of “literary texts,” and therefore have to be considered from the perspective of Artistic Expression. *Related Learning Outcomes:* Upon completing the course, students should be able to apply an understanding of methods and principles of critical inquiry to the analysis of literary expression. Issues relevant to aesthetic and critical issues of each work are presented as part of the ongoing development or evolution of English literature during the period. Because every discussion of every text at least touches on how the text was constructed by the writer, the student has a basis on which to discover the artistic dimensions of the text. Essay questions on each examination require you to demonstrate your understanding of issues of artistic expression relevant to a movement or theme or style from the period being examined in an organized and developed composition.